

URGE UAF-POD Ground Rules

- 1. We each participate to our fullest ability.** This has different meanings for each individual. Not everyone may be comfortable sharing experiences verbally, written, or at all. Hence, engagement has a broader meaning than speaking during the synchronous sessions, it ranges from active zoom discussion participation, to active engagement on slack, to note taking or session leading, to contributing questions to the pre-discussion document.
- 2. We speak from experience, rather than generalizing.** While it sometimes may appear that way, generally not all members of group X think or do or intend Y.
- 3. We show respect (even when there is disagreement)** Our tone of voice and body language matter even / or particularly in a remote environment (beware of [tone-policing](#)). Consensus is not a goal. Disrespectful/hurtful behavior should be called in right away.
- 4. We create a safe space:** We understand that everyone has unknown backgrounds, resulting in unintentional offenses. Mistakes are understandable and will further our learning. Nobody has to fear repercussions for pointing out problematic words/actions of others. We are discussing, not trying to convince others.
- 5. What's said here stays here, what's learned here leaves here.**
- 6. We learn on equal footing** - we work to identify and dissolve potential power dynamics among members of the group
- 7. We listen to understand** - We aim to fully digest perspectives of others. There's no need to worry about responding to a story; taking it in, or affirming the story teller's experience is a substantial contribution.
- 8. We disagree with thoughts or ideas, not with experiences or feelings.**
- 9. We strive to be or to become comfortable with corrections.** We are in a learning environment: say "thank you" when you are corrected and not "I'm sorry."
- 10. We have good intentions and assume good intentions in others.** We know that individual background and experiences shape thoughts/discussions, never coming from a place of malice.
- 11. We recognise that membership in a majority population does not imply agreement with the past and ongoing treatment of minorities or majority-benefitting institutional structures.** We strive to aim our energy towards changing the institutional structures still benefitting majority populations.
- 12. We will implement a way to provide anonymous contributions to topics too uncomfortable for one to address with their identity attached.** This may be necessary for any topic, but of particular importance if you are BIPOC and are having a hard time speaking up about something.
- 13. We all volunteer to be allies to those in the group who need someone to be their voice.** Reach out directly to those who you are comfortable with sharing your points of view.
- 14. We recognize that our dialogue is influenced by this being a majority-white space.** We strive to elevate BIPOC voices while avoiding tokenism.